

Keeping motivated over the winter months

Written by Christina Ryan

For more ideas on keeping focused and committed to your reaching your training goals or any other performance psychology needs [contact us](#). For more details on [Christina's](#) background [click here](#)

It is cold, wet and still dark outside when the alarm eventually wakes you from a deep bliss-filled slumber. The thought of leaving your cosy warm bed to hit the streets for your morning workout is the last thing on your mind. But, you do... Or do you?

With winter well and truly upon us some of you may be struggling to leave the confines of your winter woollens at home in favour of jumping on the bike or pounding up a hill. It is important to remember however that every day is either a step towards, or away from, reaching your ultimate goals so finding ways to keep motivation high and sustain your training workloads is important. In order to help stay focused and committed to reaching your Complete Performance goals I have therefore put together a few simple strategies to help motivate you to train... during even the most coldest of days:

1. Set clear and realistic goals:

It is impossible to complete a journey if you have no idea of where you are going. Think about what you want to achieve from your training, decide on the milestones you are hoping to reach, or the races you want to complete and use this information to determine where you are headed and when you want to get there. Having a clear and realistic direction will keep you focused on the road ahead and motivated to reach each of the milestones along the way.

2. Create a detailed action plan:

Discovering the destination is only half of the battle, mapping the journey and following through with your plan is what will actually get you to the finish line.

Divide the journey into smaller sections to help keep things manageable and to maintain your motivation along the way. Carefully consider what you need to do in order to move through each of these sections and formulate an action plan on how you will make this progress happen.

3. Monitor your progress:

Keep some form of a journal or training diary so you are able to clearly see the improvements you are making. Record both your accomplishments, as well as your feelings about meeting these milestones. Progress takes time so it will be great encouragement to see how far you have come when things feel as though they are progressing slowly. Remember also to regularly re-evaluate your action plan in order to assess whether goals and targets need to be readjusted

4. Mix things up:

Sometimes boredom comes knocking when motivation begins to wane. This is particularly true when you are doing the same workout day after day, week after week. Try spicing up your training routine by exercising at a different time of the day or breaking up your workout schedule. Add variety by switching your road bike for a mountain bike ride or changing your training routes to include new or different terrain. Whether you run, walk or bike this will be good cross training, as well as a great way to prevent boredom and training staleness.

5. Find support in numbers:

It is much easier to get out of bed for your 6 AM run when you know someone else is waiting for you. Exercising with others is therefore an easy way to stay motivated and committed to your training routine. Find friends with similar workout goals or interests and start a training group. Challenge each other, hold each other accountable and enjoy the camaraderie of working towards your goals together.

6. Schedule your workouts:

People often claim that finding time to exercise is the hardest part of being able to meet their training objectives. One way to get past this obstacle is to set out your exercise plan at the beginning of each week. Look for time in your day where activities can be rearranged or adjusted. Schedule your workouts in amongst the other tasks you need to complete. Block out time for yourself and ensure you keep this clear despite other tasks that may crop up. Remember what you are doing is important for both your physical and mental health. Be firm with your schedule and ensure you stick to your plan.

7. Reward your efforts

keeping to your training regime takes effort it is therefore nice to recognize your accomplishments when they occur. If you have managed to stick to your workout plan over the course of the week reward yourself with something you enjoy. This could be anything from watching a favourite television show to buying a multi sport magazine. Whatever you pick ensure you take the time to celebrate the work you have put in and remember the reasons why you are doing it.